

Historic milk shed is ready for a bright future By Carol Ladwig

There are plenty of folks in the Valley who could probably bend your ear about the early days of dairy farming around here, but how many of them are 17 years old?

At least one, Mike Resende, can, because he likes history, and “I got a crash course in dairy farming from Mr. (Ward) Roney and Mr. (Ray) Burhen,” he says.

His crash course, plus a lot of hard work, helped him complete his Eagle Scout project last month, the renovation of the milk shed at the Dougherty Farmstead in Duvall.

The two farmers gave Resende lessons on the steps of processing milk from cow to bottle, a review of the important role dairy farms played in the valley 100 years ago, and even some unexpected excitement.

“I got to explore the top of Mr. Roney’s barn,” Resende said, “and it was an adventure – one that I never want to repeat, because there was a huge hornets’ nest up there...”

The top of the barn, though, turned out to be a treasure trove of historical farming equipment, where Resende finally found – after two trips – the two-basin sink he needed.

Resende not only transformed the little ramshackle building into a tidy addition to the exhibits at the farmstead, he also furnished it with working (or close to it) equipment from the same period as the farm – most of it from the Dougherty House basement – and posted informational signs about how each piece was used in the shed.

“It’s actually kind of neat to see all this stuff that used to be working around here,” he said.

He had to make two exceptions to fully equip the shed: neither the sink nor the water heater is from the late 1800s. Few sinks built in that era survived to modern times, because they were made with such thin metal – a wire brush would poke right through it, he explained.

The water heater was even more difficult to obtain, although no hornets nests were involved. “There wasn’t anything I could find,” he said. “I went on Ebay, I



Greenish walls and a moss-green roof were the first things Mike Resende saw when he started his Eagle project of renovating the Dougherty Farmstead milk shed. (Courtesy photo)



The milk shed required loads of cleaning, but the hard work paid off for both Resende and the farmstead. They all now have a building they can proudly show to other people. Photo by Carol Ladwig

went everywhere to find a period water heater.” So, the Duvall Historical Society which hosts public events at the farm gave him the OK to use another heater, retired from use.

Before he could do any furnishing, though, Resende had to clean the shed – really clean it. On his first of six work days, he thought he had vision problems, because the exterior walls of the shed looked green. He didn’t; they were, green with moss and mold.

“This looked a lot worse than the barn, except the barn was half gone,” he said, referring to the even older barn, since demolished as part of another project, that stood just behind



Mike Resende spent more than 200 hours on the milk shed for his Eagle award, which he hopes to have by the end of the year. Photo by Carol Ladwig

the milk shed.

Although the shed was a huge project, Resende found that a small group of helpers was enough, since no more

than a few people could work inside the building at any one time.

Also, he said, “I figured out that if I had four really good workers, it was better than eight, because I don’t have to keep telling them what to do.”

His friends, and other Scouts from his Troop 573 helped him with the project, when they could, but summer is a tough time to arrange work days, because everyone’s gone, he said. One thing he wasn’t counting on, though, was the release of a book.

“Harry Potter screwed me over!” he jokes. “I had a work day set up for the day after the book premiered,”

he said. Most of his help didn’t show that day, but then, he admitted he was reading the book every time he took a break, too.

The rest of the work days, his helpers were busy hauling out garbage, scrubbing, sealing, pressure-washing, painting, scrubbing some more, and avoiding the yellowjackets and wasps that had gotten comfortable in the long-unused shed. Much of the sealing they did was to prevent the insects from getting back in, because “I don’t really want them to put a bug bomb in there after all that work.”

His parents, Stephen and Pat Resende of Woodinville, were a huge help, too. “My mom is an excellent painter,” he said, and his father, besides helping him collect the sink, milk cans, and other equipment, did quite a bit of carpentry on the shed and installed moldings inside.

Resende estimates he personally has spent nearly two years of planning and about 200 hours of work on the project, but he’s not done yet. There are still weeds to pull, and since his last work day in August, the city of Duvall had a window replaced, and that needed painting. When he saw it, Resende immediately started calculating when he could come back and do that.

He has until Saturday, when the city will hold a ribbon-cutting ceremony to unveil the new and improved milk shed, in conjunction with the Duvall Heritage Festival. Resende plans to donate about \$200 to the historical society this day, too. Thanks to donations, car washes and help from area restaurants, Resende raised more money than he needed, about \$1,200.

Now that the project is nearly done, Resende will file the project paperwork in hopes of receiving the Boy Scouts Eagle award by the end of the year. But he’s already accomplished his goal. “What I wanted was a project that meant a lot to me, even after I left Boy Scouts. Something that I can show my kids some day.”

Step back in time, visit a heritage farm By Lisa L. Bailey

Saturday’s ninth annual Harvest Celebration Farm Tour features 10 farms in the lower Snoqualmie Valley and several more in the Redmond and Woodinville areas. Local residents need not travel far to get the full flavor and variety of the farm tour experience. From artisan cheeses made from goat’s, yak, and water buffalo milk at the River Valley Ranch in Fall City, to the giant trebuchet for catapulting pumpkins and melons at the Jubilee Farm in Carnation, there’s definitely something for everyone on the Harvest Celebration Farm Tour this year.

Two of the three heritage farm entries on the 2007 tour are the Hjertoos Farm (now known as the Carnation Tree Farm) in Carnation and the Dougherty Farm in Duvall, which will be demonstrating a wide variety of activities commonly found on family farms as recently as the mid-twentieth century.

Step back into the late 1800’s to the early to mid-1900’s and try your hand at the skills of yesteryear.

Before the advent of the chainsaw, ranch hands and farm workers used long, two-handled tools called crosscut saws to cut logs. Similarly, farmers couldn’t jump into their trucks and run down to the hardware



Demonstration of plowing with miniature mules is one of the exhibits to be featured at the Dougherty Farm during this Saturday’s Heritage Festival. Photo by Ron Bailey

store to pick up a rope. They often made their own, using a hand-cranked rope jack.

Long before the dairy case at the local grocery store, cream was skimmed off the top of milk and churned by hand into butter for use by the family and to be sold to other families in town. If that weren’t enough hard work, clothes were washed in

tubs in the yard on scrub boards – until, that is – the arrival of the technological revolution...the hand-cranked wringer washer.

When the farmer erected a new building on his property, he didn’t pick up a bundle of shingles from the home improvement warehouse, but rather he often had to split his own cedar shakes out of cedar blocks cut from old-growth trees that had fallen in the forest. When it came planting time, the ground was plowed using a team of horses or mules – a practice which continued well into the mid-1950s, when mechanical tractors began to dot the landscape.

Finally, when apple season rolled around, it was time to make cider using an old-fashioned cider press. Long before readily available cans of soda pop, the cider press could be found on nearly every family farm.

This year, the Dougherty Farm will also host members of the Snoqualmie Tribe, who will be demonstrating basket hat weaving and sharing songs and stories of their heritage and culture.

So, get out and explore the Harvest Celebration Farm Tour Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.